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# Regional Council Activity Report

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March 24, 2004



## Executive Director's Report

On April 12, 2004, MAG celebrates its 37th birthday. It was in 1967 that the Maricopa Association of Governments was formed – through concurrent resolutions from its member agencies – to foster regional cooperation and address regional problems. MAG was born out of a desire to solve problems shared across jurisdictional boundaries. In 1973, MAG was designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Maricopa region through the Federal Transportation Act. Here are just a few of the ways MAG has improved the quality of life in the region.

- 1985 The MAG Regional Council developed the Regional Freeway Plan. Working with the business community and the legislature, the vote on the half-cent sales tax for transportation was overwhelmingly approved by voters.
- 1985 MAG implemented a state-of-the art regional emergency 9-1-1 system. For the first time, Valley citizens no longer had to dial police and fire departments directly.
- 1987 MAG established a task force on homelessness, which led to extensive recommendations to address regional homelessness.
- 1990 MAG is one of the first councils of governments in the nation to successfully conduct the federally-required air quality conformity analysis. Every transportation plan since has been found to be in conformance.
- 1995 MAG conducted the largest special census in the history of the United States.
- 1996 MAG revised the freeway program to accelerate the Regional Freeway System and to fund the Red Mountain and San Tan freeways, with completion of the system scheduled in 2014.
- 1998 MAG spearheaded an effort to receive its fair share of federal transportation dollars. Increased funding results in acceleration of the freeway system by 2007, seven years earlier than planned.

- 2000 MAG created a Regional Domestic Violence Council to develop a coordinated community response to addressing domestic violence.
- 2001 MAG approved \$750,000 to launch the Freeway Service Patrol program.
- 2002 MAG created the Transportation Policy Committee, a public/private partnership, to oversee development of the Regional Transportation Plan. The Plan is scheduled to go before voters in November 2004.
- 2003 In a joint effort with ADOT, MAG committed \$34 million from its federal transportation funds to pay for 115 miles of rubberized asphalt on Valley freeways.
- 2004 MAG launched the Community Emergency Notification System, a computerized telephone dialing system to quickly notify residents in an emergency.

These achievements are a testament to the vision of our local elected leaders that we have enjoyed more than three decades of success. We should be proud of the accomplishments we have achieved, knowing that there are many yet to come.

**For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**



## **Regional Council Meeting Report for March 24, 2004**

### **Action Items**

#### **Draft FY 2009 Project List Approved**

The MAG Regional Council has approved the draft FY 2009 project list for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Life Cycle and Statewide Program. Each year, ADOT, in cooperation with MAG and the Regional Public Transportation Authority, prepares updates for both the five-year Statewide Highway Construction Program for the MAG region and the Life Cycle Program for the MAG Regional Freeway System. This year's update includes changes to projects added for the new "fifth" year of the program.

It is important to note that the proposed FY 2009 Statewide Program is interim, pending the extension of the half-cent sales tax and programming of new projects as identified in the Regional Transportation Plan. If the sales tax is extended, the Statewide Program will again need to be revised.

**For more information, please contact Eric Anderson, MAG Transportation Director, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Ozone Plan Includes Redesignation Request**

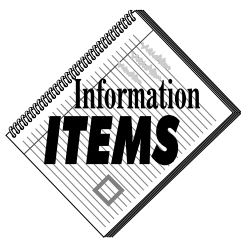
A new Ozone Maintenance Plan prepared by the Maricopa Association of Governments and adopted by the Regional Council includes a request that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) change the region's designation from a "nonattainment" area to one of "attainment" for ozone pollution.

Nonattainment is a classification given to areas that are unable to meet, or attain, federal requirements for pollution levels. But with the Valley's seven-year track record of clean data for ozone, a redesignation appears a likely possibility. No violations of the one-hour ozone standard have occurred since 1996. With the submission of the redesignation request and maintenance plan, the region has satisfied all of the requirements necessary to change our classification to one of attainment.

The Valley is currently considered a "Serious Area" for the one-hour ozone standard. In a finding May 30, 2001, the EPA determined that the Valley has attained the standard, a necessary step in the process of redesignation. In order to redesignate the region, EPA must determine, among other criteria, that the improvement in air quality is due to permanent and enforceable reductions in emissions.

If approved by the EPA, modeling data shows that air quality standards will continue to be met through 2015.

**For more information, please contact Lindy Bauer, MAG Environmental Director, at (602) 254-6300.**



### **Information Items**

#### **Videoconferencing System Awards Presented**

During the Regional Council meeting, MAG member agencies and MAG committees were recognized for their videoconferencing usage in calendar year 2003. Member agencies and committees that consistently utilize videoconferencing reduce vehicles miles traveled, thereby reducing air pollution. Categories included: Most Videoconferences by a MAG Member Agency, which was awarded to the Town of Guadalupe; Most Videoconferences by a MAG Committee, which was given to the Building Codes Committee; Most Miles Saved by a MAG Member Agency, which was awarded to the Town of Wickenburg; and a special award that was given to recognize the Regional Videoconferencing System Committee Champion, which was presented to the MAG Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

**For more information, please contact Heidi Pahl, MAG Videoconferencing Planner II, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Legislative Update Provided**

An update was provided to the MAG Regional Council to increase awareness of legislative bills this session relevant to the MAG planning process. Senate Bill 1271 would have made lagging left turn arrows required by the state manual for traffic control device systems. A floor amendment required that by January 2006, at least 80 percent of a municipality's turn signals must be lagging, or the municipality would not be eligible to receive CMAQ funds. The bill failed to pass the Senate by a vote of 9-20.

House Bill 2049, which allows MAG's inclusion into the state retirement system, passed the House and was assigned to the Senate Finance Committee. Senate Bill 1341 passed the Senate and was assigned to two House committees. This bill eliminates the exemption for political subdivisions from the requirement to file an affidavit of legal value with any property transfer or sale. Additionally, it exempts political subdivisions from paying the real estate transfer fee to the county recorder.

**For more information, please contact Tom Remes, MAG Senior Policy Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Draft Work Program and Annual Budget Reviewed**

The MAG Regional Council was given a review of the development of the Draft FY 2005 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget, including an overview of the expenditures, revenues and proposed projects. A revised dues and assessments schedule was also provided. Comments on the work program and budget are being accepted. The document is produced annually and is reviewed by the federal agencies in early May, then approved by Regional Council in May. The elements of the current budget document are about 95 percent complete.

**For more information, please contact Becky Kimbrough, MAG Fiscal Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Public Hearing Scheduled**

The Maricopa Association of Governments will co-host a public hearing with officials of the State Transportation Board and Valley Metro on April 21, 2004 at 3:30 p.m. to receive comments on the Annual Report on the MAG Regional Freeway Program. The public hearing will be held on the second floor of the MAG offices at 302 North 1st Avenue, in the Saguaro



Room. The hearing will take place prior to the Transportation Policy Committee meeting to be held at 4:00 p.m.

**For more information, please contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Next Regional Council Meeting**

The next Regional Council meeting is Wednesday, April 28, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include project and consultant approval for the MAG Pedestrian Design Program; a recommended amendment to the FY 2004-2007 MAG TIP for ADOT and Phoenix Highway Projects and a conformity consultation on this amendment; further discussion on the work program and annual budget; presentation of the Annual Report on the MAG Regional Freeway Program; and a legislative update.

**For more information, contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**